

Q3 rapid review analysis

1 October to 31 December 2025

An overview of rapid reviews submitted to the Panel, highlighting key risks and emerging themes

Key stats

74* rapid reviews submitted

51% serious harm

43% deaths

* For incidents between 1 October to 31 December 2025

Key insights

- Serious harm was the most common incident type
- Children aged 11 to 17 were most affected
- More incidents involved boys
- Domestic abuse and non-engagement were key themes

Type of incidents

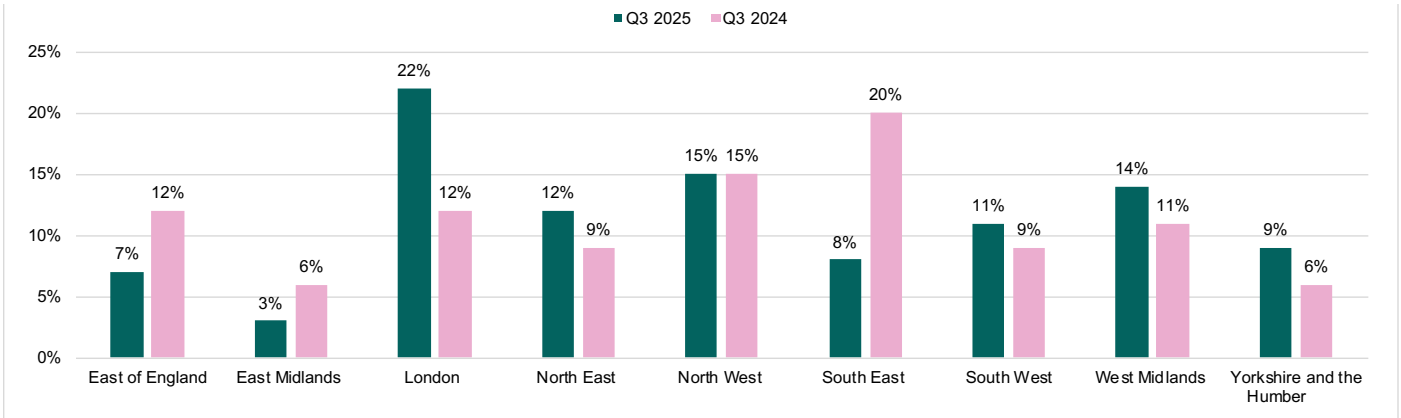
Number of rapid reviews	Q3 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2024
Death	32 (43%)	32 (43%)	34 (52%)
Serious harm	38 (51%)	41 (55%)	31 (47%)
Other*	4 (5%)	2 (3%)	1 (2%)
Total	74 (100%)	75 (100%)	66 (100%)

Serious harm decreased from 55% in Q2 2025 to 51%.

Deaths remained at 43%, consistent with Q2 2025.

* Some notifications were classed as 'other' issues, for example where harm was caused by a child or a child was exposed to a serious incident or trauma.

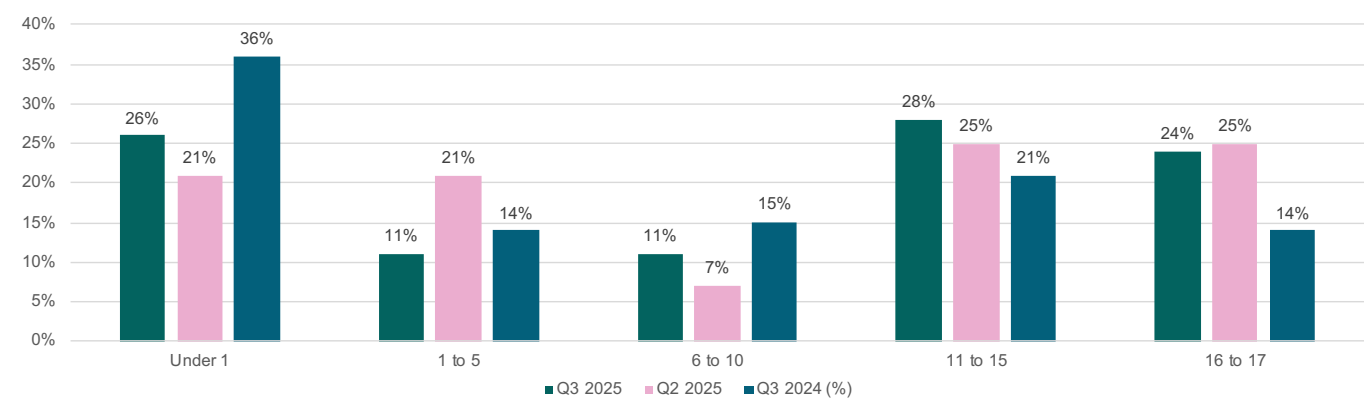
Regional breakdown



- London reported the highest number of incidents
- Compared to Q3 2024, incidents increased in London and Yorkshire and the Humber
- Compared to Q3 2024, incidents decreased in the East of England and the South East

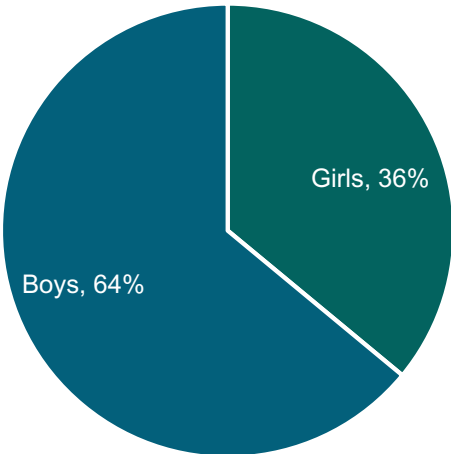
Children at the heart of the reviews

Age



- Over half of incidents involved children aged 11 to 17
- Incidents involving children aged under 1 decreased compared to Q3 2024
- Incidents involving children aged 16 to 17 increased compared to Q3 2024

Sex



- Nearly two-thirds of incidents involved boys
- This represents a notable increase compared to previous quarters and may be linked to a rise in extrafamilial non-fatal assault

Ethnicity

Ethnicity Group	Q3 25	Q2 25	Q3 24
White	76%	74%	83%
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Group	7%	18%	9%
Asian/Asian British	11%	4%	2%
Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British	7%	3%	6%
Other Ethnic Group	0%	1%	0%

- 76% of reviews where the child’s ethnicity was reported involved children from white backgrounds
- Compared to Q2 2025, reviews involving children from Asian backgrounds increased

Disability

- 28% of children were recorded as having a disability.
- This is a notable increase compared to Q3 2024

Understanding the incidents

Causes of incidents

Most common causes of death

- Unexplained SUDI/SUDC (38%)
- Suicide (31%)
- Extreme neglect (6%)

Most common causes of serious harm

- Intrafamilial non-fatal assault (29%)
- Non-fatal neglect (24%)
- Extrafamilial non-fatal assault (21%)

Emerging themes

Domestic abuse

- 53% of reviews involved children who had experienced or witnessed domestic abuse
 - Of these reviews, 44% included domestic abuse and harm to children as a theme
- Challenges distinguishing parental conflict from domestic abuse
- Limited exploration of coercive and controlling behaviour
- Limited insight into the risk posed by fathers/male adults

Practice implications

- Recognise children as victims in their own right
- Consider the lasting impact of domestic abuse on families, even after the perpetrator has left the home
- Explore wider risk factors, including parental trauma, substance use and mental health

Children with disabilities

- 28% of reviews included children who were identified as having a disability
 - Of this, the child's disability was linked to their harm in half of reviews
- Children's needs were not always fully recognised or met
- A parent or relevant adult had a disability in 16% of reviews
- Significant but unconfirmed parental needs were identified in a further 14% of reviews

Non-engagement

- 61% of reviews included concerns about non-engagement
- 39% involved non-consent to services

Key issues

- Declining social care, early help or specialist intervention
- Declining health or mental health support
- Restricted professional access to children
- Frequent non-attendance at appointments leading to service closure

How to use this data

It can be used to:

- review how your local data and recent cases compare with national patterns
- consider how domestic abuse is identified and responded to locally
- reflect on how services respond to non-engagement and non-consent
- explore how risks affecting older children and children with disabilities are identified and addressed in practice

Reflective questions

- How effectively are children experiencing domestic abuse recognised and supported?
- How are the needs of children with disabilities identified and responded to?
- How effectively do agencies respond when families disengage from services?
- How are risks affecting older children and extrafamilial harm identified and managed?

Further resources and feedback

You can access related learning resources, newsletters and reports on [our website](#).

We welcome feedback on this report, including:

- examples of local practice or learning
- resources you would like to share
- topics you would like to see explored further

Contact us at Communications.NATIONALREVIEWPANEL@education.gov.uk

Caveats to this data

- Rapid reviews should be submitted within 15 working days of notification, but submission times can vary. Therefore, the totals presented may not include all incidents notified within the quarter and may be subject to change
- Emerging themes reflect both rapid review data and Panel analysis within case discussions
- The themes presented are only a sample and not an exhaustive picture of all emerging themes within the data
- Percentages are based on reported incidents. Some incidents involved more than one child, and figures are rounded. As a result, percentages may not always sum to 100%.